

NEPALI
Times

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WE BELONG TOGETHER

Assamese music teacher Meera Thapa was singing at a concert in Kathmandu last week when, in the middle of an old song by Tara Debi, she burst into tears.

Meera Thapa is a third-generation Nepali, born in Digboi, educated in Shillong and mentored by diaspora poet-musician Hari Bhakta Katuwal. Her Bengali is more fluent than her Nepali and she seldom comes to Nepal.

Yet, while singing at Paleti on Friday, when she got to the part where the lyrics go 'if there is a heaven on earth, it is my motherland...', Meera Thapa could not control the emotions that welled up in her soul.

Wherever we may be, however much removed by time and distance from the land of our ancestors, there is a Nepali-ness that binds us. It is an emotional bond that is perhaps best expressed in poetry or song. Much more than a sense of shared history, more than the language, religion and festivals, beyond the artificial icons of nationhood, Mt Everest, Lumbini and the danfe, or even the now-defunct monarchy, a togetherness unites the Nepali world.

Meera Thapa's tears signified a pure and intense emotional attachment to the land of her forebears. What was remarkable was that this sense of belonging hadn't diminished with separation, nor with the passage of generations. Five Nepali migrant workers—a Madhesi, a Janajati, a Chhetri, a Bahun and a Dalit—have jointly set up a literary society in the UAE. They meet regularly for gazal readings. The message in their poetry and song is always: why, if the rest of the world sees us as just Nepalis, do we look for differences among us?

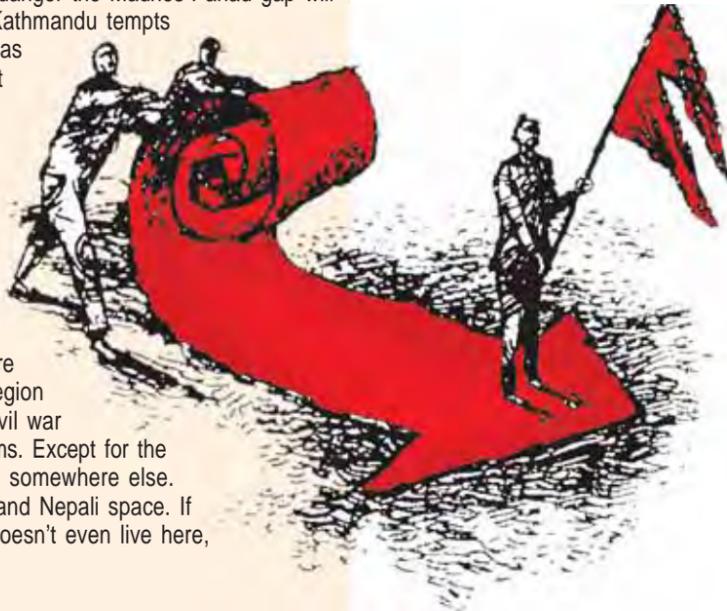
It is the tragedy of our times that the post-2006 identity politics is over-correcting past injustices and taking us down the path of ethno-chauvinism. While compensating for historic exclusion, we want to enforce even worse intolerance.

We have to pull ourselves out of the quagmire. Today's prolonged political paralysis does not help. It is bringing out all kinds of demons in us. There is a danger the Madhes-Pahad gap will widen if the political tug-of-war in Kathmandu tempts the Maoists to project themselves as the protectors of the Pahad against those espousing a united Madhes.

The Madhes needs autonomy, but not at the expense of other Tarai dwellers. Its ethno-separatist slogans threaten our infant republic because it would set a precedence for every other grouping for an unviable 'homeland'.

Let's not get into who came here first. Learn from countries in our region which have suffered decades of civil war when they opened that can of worms. Except for the Tarai aborigines, we all came from somewhere else.

We all share a Nepali identity and Nepali space. If someone like Meera Thapa, who doesn't even live here, feels she belongs, why don't we?



Peace dividend?

The politicians are so busy bickering, they have forgotten the people

The monarchy has now been gone for more than a month and the 'people's war' ended two years ago, but there is no sign of the peace dividend. The country is without a head of state and run by a caretaker government two months after elections.



GUEST COLUMN
Bihari K Shrestha

With scarcely any time left to produce next year's fiscal budget, which we were promised would reflect revolutionary change, the political parties continue to bicker. They have spent two precious months exchanging threats and mutual recriminations over what should have been simple democratic, consensual decision-making.

At issue have been an agreement on how to form and dissolve the government, the return of property seized by the

Maoists, the demilitarisation of the YCL, and the merging of Maoist soldiers into the regular army.

These now seem to have been sorted out, but in the meantime the sand under the political parties has shifted. While the NC and UML initially worked together to get the Maoists to agree to these conditions, the UML is now increasingly aligned with the Maoists in a move to make a UML politician the first president of Nepal.

Similarly, the MJF, the fourth main party and largest in the Tarai, went along with the NC and UML at first, but is now intent on holding up the assembly sessions by demanding an autonomous Madhes even before a new constitution is written. It is being supported in this by the TMDP and the SP, who hitherto were political rivals.

There is a strong feeling of déjà vu in all this. Most of the conditions negotiated with the Maoists were agreed after the 1990 andolan, but things only went downhill thereafter. During the subsequent 14 years of unfettered 'democratic' practice, political corruption and waywardness flourished. The NC and UML vied ruthlessly to control the government, not hesitating to enter into opportunistic alliances with the leaders of the Panchayat regime they had ousted. The present squabbling simply emphasises the self-serving nature of our politicians.

The people are desperate for food, jobs, income, healthcare and education. They were promised these during the elections, but now that the

politicians are comfortably ensconced, these issues are being ignored in the power plays. Whatever sense of collective accountability that appeared at election time has vanished into thin air.

The donor community seems concerned. A stream of senior foreign aid officials have been visiting Kathmandu recently, obviously hoping that their presence and promise of funds would somehow help restore normalcy.

But, judging by the post-1990 era, the availability of easy money without policy and institutional reforms only fuels corruption. Surely donors must realise that Nepal has been an aid recipient longer than most other countries but continues to wallow in chronic poverty. Ill-conceived aid does in fact do more harm than good: it amounts to killing with kindness.

For there to be a peace dividend, donors must insist on the empowerment of the people, with aid money going directly to the people.

Look at the success of the community forest projects. The World Bank in 1987 made user management of forests a condition for its \$50 million Structural Adjustment Loan, thus forcing the government to amend forestry legislation in 1988.

This did not cost the bank a single cent, but it made Nepal a model for successful forest protection and the user groups themselves became significant conduits for local development. Thus the cardinal rule of responsible aid-giving should be to help Nepal devolve authority to its primary stakeholders. ●

LETTERS

CYCLE CITY

Kathmandu Valley would benefit most from a combination and choice of non-fossil fuelled mobility options: biofuel-powered private motor vehicles and both bus and rail transit, bicycles and walking. ('Cycle city', #405) Effective mobility requires maintaining the compact, diverse and accessible urban planning and building that traditionally made cities economically and environmentally sustainable

Stephen Coyle, email

● I accept that the United Nations is necessary for Nepal's peace process and development. But looking at the obscene salaries it pays its staff and the wastage of resources in driving around in huge gas-guzzling SUVs, one wonders if it couldn't do more if it spent less on itself.

At a time when the whole world is reeling under a fuel crisis, the UN should set an example by reducing travel, using staff buses, bicycles, electric vehicles for delivery and generally cutting down on its carbon footprint.

C Rajendra, email

HEALTH HEROES

The reason doctors only serve in Kathmandu and not in remote areas ('Nepal's unsung health heroes', #405) is because the doctors have no choice. Stop blaming the doctors. Everything in Nepal is centralised so they have no choice. Think of those few doctors serving in remote areas. Is their service rewarded appropriately by the government? Are they given incentives? Is their work even noticed by the health ministry?

Puspa Pant, Aberdeen

● Nepal has a multi-tier health system. Rich patients go to Bangkok or India. The middle-class go to expensive clinics and nursing homes in Kathmandu. The underprivileged queue up at government and teaching hospitals in Kathmandu and other cities. The poor go to local health centres in villages and district hospitals. And finally, there are the many who do not

have access to any kind of healthcare system whatsoever.

As Mark Zimmerman says ('Not just any doctor', #405) MDGPs can play a major leadership role at the district level, to improve health care. However, let us not forget that embedded within the vision of a 21st century healthcare delivery is the ever-growing need for specialists. Primary care at the health post level, complicated cases to MDGPs at district level, selected

cases to zonal hospitals for specialist care and Kathmandu, Dharan, Bharatpur for highly specialised care, eg neurosurgery, cardiothoracic surgery, transplant surgery, interventional radiology, etc. For conditions needing long-term or life-long follow up, the continuity-of-care chain goes backward following the referral chain. For smooth referral, good telecommunication and information infrastructures—including air

ambulances—are essential. I know I am dreaming, but we will get there one day.

MDGPs is one place to start.

J Jaspure, Edinburgh

● Doctors can be stimulated to work in the remote areas by giving them attractive salaries. I remember that a Scottish organisation had to spend money to bring a Scottish GP to work in the far west as Nepali doctors refused to work there for the low salary. Paisa always matters.

Glen Mitrasingh, Amsterdam

PRESIDENT

Madhab Kumar Nepal is the best choice for president. He is a simple man, his wife still works for a government bank and he has already had experience as deputy prime minister and foreign and defence minister of the country. Besides, he was the General Secretary of the second largest party of the nation during the time of the people's movement. Sahana Pradhan and Subash Nembang are cadre of the same party where he was the General Secretary.

Rajesh Gautam, Putali Sadak



Big Three vs Other Three

If moderate Madhesis are ignored, it is the militants who will benefit



JALESHWAR—This town on Nepal's southern edge hasn't changed since the days when it was one of the biggest contributors to the national treasury. The Ranas named the local revenue office Bhaari Maal



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

after the heavy load of silver coins it generated, to be transported by elephant to Birganj.

From there, the taxes went either to pay for lavish palaces in Kathmandu or investments in Calcutta.

Bhaari Maal administered the very heartland of the Madhes. Its territory stretched from Kamala-Balan in the east to the Bagmati

and from the Indian border to the Chure ranges. Jaleshwar is now the headquarters of rump Mahottari. But rumblings here—more than anywhere else in the region—are still indicative of pressure building up in the central Tarai.

Colonial agents built a Raj Devi temple here, as at most outposts of the Gorkha empire. But the presiding deity of the town continued to be Jaleshwarnath, the supreme god of water. It is through him that Shiva displays his powers of being the protector, provider and destroyer of water-dependent farming communities, the backbone of Nepal's economy.

For much of the year, the revered Shiva linga of Jaleshwarnath remains submerged in the inner sanctum,

cut out of a single rock within a well, over which a temple has been built. Pilgrims pray at the pool, which remains full but never overflows. Shiva's anger, like his munificence, is displayed through Rato, a temperamental river that flows west of the settlement. The monsoon has barely begun but Rato's wrath has already claimed a life. Even more disconcerting is the political turbulence gathering pace here.

During the Madhes Uprising last year, larger Mahottari remained relatively calm. Unlike the violent eruptions in Lahan to the east or the gore of Gaur in the west, protests in Jaleshwar were restrained. That may not last if nothing changes in the attitude of Kathmandu's rulers towards the Tarai.

As elsewhere in Nepal, joblessness, backwardness and poverty in the Madhes have intensified with the continued neglect of agriculture. But it's the smugness of the rulers—predominantly Pahadis—that really rankles. The conduct of government officials towards the people they are supposed to serve is the primary, but not the only, source of rancour.

Though the masses still accept mistreatment as their lot, the petit bourgeois—the most volatile section of the population—vocally question the status quo these days.

Retired Madhesi officials and teachers feel that they now receive less respect than they extended to Pahadis during their own working careers. Returnees

from West Asia and Malaysia feel the anger when they are questioned rudely at Kathmandu airport. Students believe they are destined to fail in a system loaded against them. Job-seekers have no confidence in the hiring mechanisms of the government. Procurement procedures of development agencies are perceived to be inherently biased against Madhesi entrepreneurs.

This then is the constituency of the MJF and the TMLP. However, both these Madhes-based parties are dismissed as perfidious. Perhaps that's the reason they have lately begun to assert themselves in the distant capital. The continued neglect of the Madhes is becoming a rallying point to those advocating armed insurrection. Until a year ago, the view that Madhesis should become like Maobadis to get their due would have been taboo at

social gatherings. Today it's a constant refrain.

Even more disturbing is the derisiveness with which the Big Three (NC, UML and Maoists) dismiss the claims of the Other Three Madhes parties (MJF, TMLD and Sadbhavana). The NC seeks advantage from Madhesi-Maoist enmity. The UML bad-mouths Madhesis to consolidate its vote-bank of Pahadi settlers in the Tarai. The Maoists want to show that they are now in charge and are the sole arbiters in deciding what is right or wrong.

The big three parties will have to realise that their fates are intertwined with each other as well as with those of moderate Madhesis. If the MJF and TMLD are made to fail, victory will go the likes of Goit and Jwala Singh, or worse, independent member of the constituent assembly Baban Singh. ●

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"Only the private sector can deliver inclusive growth"

In an interview with Nepali Times this week, US Ambassador to Nepal Nancy Powell discusses the current political deadlock, the future of US development aid, the resettlement of refugees from Bhutan and threats to press freedom.



ANUP PRAKASH

Nepali Times: How does the United States evaluate Nepal's political transformation over the past two years, and in particular the post-election scenario?

Nancy Powell: The United States regards Nepal's political transformation over the past two years from a state wracked by insurgency without a democratic government to its current situation of relative peace with a popularly elected Constituent Assembly and Parliament as a tremendous and very positive achievement for which all Nepalis should be proud. However, almost 12 weeks have passed since the April 10 election. There is an urgent need for the political parties to find a way to establish a new government which can address the many pressing concerns of the country's citizens, particularly the need for security through the rule of law. The Constituent Assembly needs to begin its important work of drafting a new constitution.

That being said, what pitfalls do you see ahead?

Nepal has made huge strides, but the country's transformation is far from complete. The challenges of providing economic prosperity, truly participatory democracy, security, and lasting stability are enormous. Some of these challenges are the result of global issues such as the food crisis and petroleum prices, but others are due to deeply rooted domestic inequities and patterns which will be difficult to change. Nepal needs to figure out ways to attract foreign and domestic investment so it can begin to create the jobs its young population requires. It also needs to find a way to satisfy the understandable demands of the country's many different groups while at the same time creating a national sense of identity that unifies all Nepalis.

Are you concerned at all that democratic values and press freedom may be threatened in the near future?

I am very concerned and have been meeting with representatives of the parties and the media to register that concern and discuss how the United States can assist in promoting a free press in Nepal. Reports of on-going threats and self-censorship as the result of political intimidation are very worrying and need to be addressed by all Nepalis who hope to see democracy sustained. We will continue to work with the media to strengthen its professionalism and to protect the freedom of the press.

How closely has the United States been working with India to coordinate policy towards Nepal?

The United States consults regularly with the other countries with interests in Nepal, including, of course, India, but we formulate our own policy.

So, would you say that geographically there has been a change in the United States' perception of Nepal?

There has been no change.

There have been attacks on the IOM office managing resettlement of refugees from Bhutan. How seriously do you take the opposition to the resettlement program?

The United States joins IOM, UNHCR, and WFP in strongly condemning attacks against the refugees and infrastructure used to support them. A small group of violent extremists has shown contemptuous disregard for the free choice for resettlement being made by the refugees. The Nepali government must put an end to this violence, protect the refugees and the international community that is providing assistance, and prosecute the criminals responsible.

Don't you think your resettlement lets the Bhutan regime completely off the hook?

The US and many other nations continue to push Bhutan to accept repatriation. Resettlement is offered by the US and other countries only as a last resort and so that people whose lives have been in limbo for more than 17 years have some opportunity for a normal life.

Your government and the Europeans have expressed concern about the arrest of Tibetan activists here. But shouldn't you try to understand Nepal's sensitivities and geopolitical compulsions on this issue?

We expect the Nepali government to adhere to international and Nepali human rights obligations regarding the detention of individuals and the humane treatment of peaceful protesters. We understand and respect Nepal's national security concerns and, certainly, the importance of protecting diplomatic premises, but believe the recent arrests and the harsh treatment accorded peaceful protestors violate Nepal's own laws.

Once and for all, can you clarify for us what the status of the Maoists is in the State Department's terror watchlist?

The CPN-Maoists are currently designated on the Terrorist Exclusion list and Specially Designated Nationals list. They are not and never have been on the Foreign Terrorist Organisations list.

How are US-funded projects in Nepal now going to be handled? Are the priorities going to change?

US foreign assistance programs will continue to support the government's most important development priorities. We, like all Nepalis and other donors, are anxiously awaiting the formation of the new government and the enunciation of its development priorities. We currently have three assessment teams in Nepal to review priority needs in the democracy and governance, economic growth, and peace building areas. While these teams have been meeting with government officials, civil society leaders, rural communities and other donors, they have not had an opportunity to benefit from meeting the new ministers.

We plan to continue our collaboration with government, beneficiaries, and other partners as we implement future programs. The US provided more than \$75 million in foreign aid to Nepal last year, which is the highest level of US foreign assistance funding allocated to Nepal in recent years. We expect our fiscal year 2008 budget to reach similar levels. In fact, our Congress just appropriated an additional \$7 million in fiscal year 2008 funds for Nepal to support the democratic transition and promote economic growth. We plan to maintain our support for the implementation of the peace process and the transition to a more representative democracy and support the Nepali government's plans to provide health services to all citizens. In addition, we have just begun programs to increase agricultural productivity, to repair public infrastructure in flood and conflict-affected areas, and to increase rural incomes through vocational training.

But are there concerns about the new government's commitment to the private sector, free market and FDI?

I firmly believe that only higher levels of inclusive growth can deliver lasting poverty reduction which will help to stabilise Nepal, and only the private sector can deliver that growth. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), which we expect to lead the new government, has expressed a commitment since the CA election to support the private sector, the free market and foreign direct investment, but its actions and those of its supporters will need to match that rhetoric. The government will play a very important role in creating the policy environment in which the economy can grow. We strongly hope that the new government will recognise that the private sector is by far the most powerful engine for economic growth.

On a slightly more personal note, people here have remarked on your low-key style compared with your predecessor. How much of a difference does the personality of the ambassador make in diplomacy?

When I arrived in August 2007, I noticed that Nepalis were speaking out with a great deal of courage and force to protect their rights and to move the country toward elections. I did not want to drown out those voices with mine and hope that I have successfully found other ways to express my support for their efforts.



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Cash crops

Nepali farmers should be able to benefit from the rise in food prices

This time round, farmers at the rice-planting ceremonies have been more enthusiastic, with more of them participating and people travelling back to their villages to ensure that their land does not remain uncultivated. The global



ECONOMIC SENSE
Artha Beed

rise in food prices has suddenly made agriculture seem like a lucrative business once more. Is that good news in a country where 80 per cent of the people depend on farming?

Food security has been a constant issue in this country's history, and even today there are pockets of Nepal that face acute food shortages. One of the traditional ways of providing food security was through the *guthi* (trust communes), where land was owned by trusts whose members provided the labourers



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

who did the work, and then shared the produce that was grown. As well as the trust members, the actual tillers of the land received a share of the harvest in return for their labour.

With the increase in land prices, there has been widespread conversion of agriculture land into commercial and residential properties and the *guthi* members have been busy counting money. The *guthi* system ensured the

continuity of food security through the generations and steady reinvestment in the *guthi* through the purchase of extra land as the population increased.

It would be interesting for economists to work out the price of rice that would be required for it to become more profitable to continue growing rice than to sell farm land for conversion to commercial or residential use.

Agriculture productivity in

Nepal has been among the lowest in South Asia. Rice productivity per hectare is way behind the regional average and the cost of production per hectare is also high. With about 5 million tonnes of rice being produced, if we could augment this by even 20 per cent that would bring an additional Rs 5 billion into the economy.

However, it is also important that quality does not suffer in the quest to raise productivity. Nepali markets are flooded with vegetables that are grown using chemical additives to speed up the growing process. While it is important to increase production, this should not mean flouting the law and creating severe health risks. With 601 members sitting in the Constituent Assembly, perhaps some of them could be spared to work on laws to regulate the quality of agricultural production.

While other countries have been busy setting up task forces to

examine the impact of rising food prices—whether the social costs of the rising prices or the new economic opportunities that may result—we in Nepal are still busy looking for a president.

The government needs to assess the immediate impact of the food price rises on salaries, and should be prepared for demonstrations by the labour unions, who never waste the chance to demand higher wages or shorter working hours. It should also expect protests from government employees, who find the value of their wages plummeting.

The budget is the right time for everyone to make noises. But Nepal, like some African and Central American countries, usually falls into the trap of finding short-term solutions without designing long-term policies in the agriculture sector. What Nepal needs is not heaps of documents like the Agriculture Perspective Plan that are relegated to shelves, but a prescriptive policy that will take care of production, productivity, pricing and regulation without losing sight of the need for food security and related issues. ●

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Dalit drama



Santosh Baraili in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 30 June- 15 July

हिमाल

The television series *Dalan*, which is broadcast every Sunday on Nepal Television, has managed to display Nepali society through Dalit eyes. It shows the political, social and cultural changes that took place from 1951 to 1995.

Set in the 1950s, the series is truly heart-warming. At a time when inter-caste marriage was almost unthinkable, Harihar, a Brahmin man, falls in love and weds Tulki, a Damini (a Dalit woman). When the villagers discover that he has married an untouchable, they shave his head and banish him from the village. Tulki gives birth to a baby boy. They are helped by Dhammare Damai, who takes pity on them. With no money and a new-born child, they agree to work as bonded labourers to Sher Bahadur, the landlord. *Dalan* is the story of how this couple and their children

struggle for their freedom in society. Scriptwriter Aahuti says: "*Dalan* is the true depiction of how society viewed dalits from 1951."

Aahuti's story has been brought to life by director Nabin Subba. *Dalan* has established itself in the league of the Umesh Nath Aryal-directed *Bhid Dekhi Bhidsamma*, and *Abiral Bagdacha Indrawati* by director Badri Adhikari, and has given imitators of Hindi soaps something to copy. But there are a few weaknesses in the subject matter and in establishing the characters. The relationship between Harihar and Tulki is unclear, and questions have been raised as to what ignited such a union in 1951.

Since most of the actors involved are from the stage, the acting and dialogue appear theatrical. The cast includes Bhusan Pokhrel as Harihar, Babita Sharma as Tulki, Anup Baral as Juthe and Dia Maskey as Kali. According to Subba, the 44-part series has 300 actors.

It appears rather unconvincing in terms of its costumes, playback singing and editing. New *daura suruwals* have been smeared with dirt in places to give a feeling of poverty. White clothes have been patched with red, and vice versa. The subject matter of the story and the songs don't go well together, and the make-up of the actors is often overdone. Tulki of the 1950s looks no different from actresses of today, and the scenes where Tulki tries to commit suicide and Harihar goes to *muglan* are excessively long.

However, the series, funded by the European Union and produced for Rs 6 million, has attracted a large audience. Because it was filmed while the nation was still at war, the production unit had many problems. Says Subba: "The army's air patrols and Maoist cadres caused a lot of unnecessary trouble while we were shooting in the hills."

Dirty business

.....
Annapurna Post, 2 July

अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट

During the day the Balaju-Banasthali stretch of the Ring Road is congested because of traffic jams. At night the situation is worse because of the piles of mud in the middle of the road. In the last three months there have been a number of accidents because cars skidded on the slippery mud. The mud is being brought in from a housing complex being built in Sitapaila and Hotel Annapurna. In spite of the locals requesting the vehicles responsible for the mud to dump it on the green belt at the road side, they are still dumping mud in the middle.

The secretary of the Ward 16 office, Gobinda Acharya, is helpless. He says: "No one adheres to the orders that the ward office gives. This is really unfortunate." The ward office has not been able to do anything about this situation for the last three months. Banasthali police in-charge Min Bahadur Khadka said that the police cannot interfere because it is not in their directives. "When the number of accidents increased, locals started working as vigilantes and the situation has been more under control since then," says Khadka.

General Manager of the Roads Department Tulsi Sitaula says that the department is responsible for monitoring encroachment on the ring road but because of

limited manpower they haven't been able to do their work properly. He says that his department is aware of mud being piled up on the Balaju-Banasthali stretch. "They pile the mud between 12 and 3AM so it is extremely difficult to catch those responsible," Sitaula says. He gave his assurance that the mud piles would be removed within the next two days. "But it is more important to find the culprits who are responsible. We have already started an investigation and hope to find those responsible in a week or so."

Bad education

.....
Vishwo Mani Subedi in
Jana Aastha, 2 July

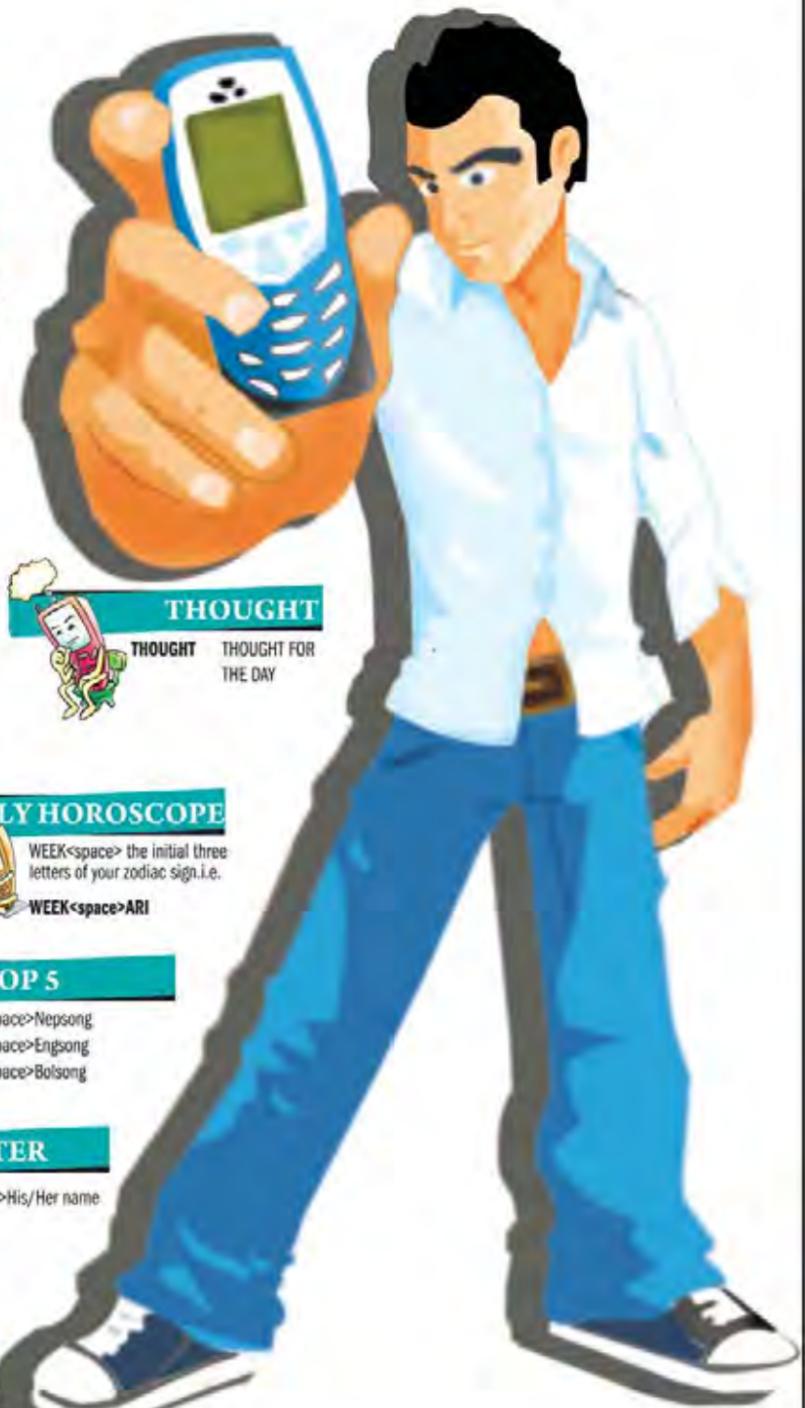
आस्था

While former king Gyanendra Shah has vowed to stay in the country, his only son, Paras Bikram Shah has packed his bags and flown to Singapore just 32 days after the monarchy was abolished. However, it seems that his schooling at posh schools in Darjeeling and Britain has not paid off very well. The embarkation card that Paras filled in at the airport was found, alarmingly, to have about 10 grammatical mistakes.

The Nepali form was filled in English. Maybe because of the 'psychological trauma' the present turn of events has caused him, Paras didn't even spell his surname correctly. Shah has carelessly been spelled 'Shash'.



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FOREX<space>BUY
FOREX<space>CURRENCY ID

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

WEEK<space>the initial three letters of your zodiac sign. i.e.

WEEK<space>ARI

DICTIONARY

DICT<space>the word you want to know the meaning of. i.e.

DICT<space>tut

CALENDER SERVICE

Calnep ddmmyyyy Nepali to English
Caleng ddmmyyyy English to Nepali

TOP 5

TOP5<space>Nepsong
TOP5<space>Engsong
TOP5<space>Bolsong

CRICKET UPDATE

cri

WEATHER

CLI<space>city name i.e.
CLI<space>dharan

LOVE METER

LM<space>Your name<space>His/Her name

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Although his date of birth has been filled in correctly, for some absurd reason Paras thought it important to write the month of his birth as '3 De' in the space. The address too has only 'Kath'. Furthermore, Paras was issued with a new 'commoners' green passport on 25 June 2008 and accordingly his passport would expire on 24 June 2018. But the former crown prince has written only '10' in the space, perhaps referring to the number of years before it expires.

Paras's spelling skills on the

form are not that commendable either, with Singapore spelt 'Singapur'. While it is well known that Paras is leaving the country for quite a long time, the form shows that he will be back after just 14 days. In addition, instead of the flight number MI 412, the name and number of the airline company have been filled in. The only things written in Nepali, the year and the month of his departure, are surprisingly correct. But the day has, again, been written in English. His signature is just a scrawl.

"Stop squabbling"

Interview with the former Chinese ambassador to Nepal, Li de Biao in Nepal, 6 July

नेपाल

With the end of the monarchy, China has lost an old friend in Nepal. In the future, who will be China's friend?

The relationship between China and Nepal is very strong. Regardless of the changes in Nepal, the Chinese policy towards Nepal will always remain the same. Whoever the Nepali people choose and want to be led by will be China's friend.

But China made no efforts to save its old friend. China never interferes in the internal matters of other countries. We respect the decision made by the Nepalis.

If the Free Tibet Movement becomes stronger in Kathmandu, what will you do?

We are aware of it. India and the west have supported the Dalai Lama and thus increased the problems. In the present political situation in Nepal, the so-called Tibet freedom movement has gained momentum. This has been China's problem for a long time. But Nepal has always treated Tibet as a part of China. The Nepal government should take a strong stance against the Free Tibet movement in Nepal.

As a Chinese diplomat, what is your advice to Nepal? Relations between Nepal and China will still be centred on the security of the two nations. But the main necessity for Nepal is economic development and prosperity. China can help Nepal with that. Now is not the time for political squabbles, the political leaders need to focus on economic development. I was the Chinese ambassador to Nepal during Jana Andolan I. Even then my suggestion was the same to the political leaders. There are still differences amongst the leaders on economic development.

How can China help Nepal in its economic development? I have been discussing with China's Chambers of Commerce and other big industrialists how China can contribute to Nepal's economic development. In the near future, I will visit Nepal with a group of industrial representatives. A lot of Chinese industrialists are interested in investing in Nepal.



Upendra Yadav and Hridayesh Tripathi: One Madhes, One Pradesh! "There is already a Madhya Pradesh, just take a look at the map."

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Chemonics International seeks qualified candidates for following positions. This is a six month, full time positions on a USAID/OTI funded program which seeks to support Nepal's political transition. This fast, flexible program is designed to bolster the current peace process; strengthen governance mechanisms; and support positive, non-violent community engagement in the country's political, social and economic future.

Central Terai Program Manager

This position will be located in Kathmandu and requires at least 50% travel to the Terai. Local expats encouraged to apply. Expats must have their own work for the duration of the position.

The Central Terai Program Manager (CTPM) is responsible for oversight of grants and activities in the central Terai region, ensuring smooth implementation and adherence to USAID rules and regulations. The CTPM will oversee regionally based staff and offices and will manage all financial, administrative and programmatic issues. The CTPM will oversee the identification of potential grantees and the development and implementation of small grant activities, primarily in-kind, that support the ongoing transition to peace and democracy in Nepal as well as oversee programmatic and implementation monitoring of each grant activity in coordination with other staff members. S/he will advise on the evolution of the local political, legal and economic situation and on how to continuously adapt the regional OTI program to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. The CTPM will report directly to the Chief of Party and advise her of program and administrative issues related to the field office.

- Strong written and spoken English language ability is required, Nepali or other local language a plus.
- Knowledge of USAID rules and regulations, especially financial
- Experience conceptualizing, implementing, and monitoring small grant projects
- Experience overseeing projects and project budgets
- Minimum of two years experience working in a complex and challenging field operation in unstable developing countries with preferably at least one year in a supervisory capacity

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PICS: RUPA JOSHI

History in the ma

The Sindhuli Highway is not just a new shortcut to eastern Nepal, it takes us back into history

Nearly 250 years ago, this was the road to defeat for Captain Kinloch as his East India Company troops were crushed by Gorkhali soldiers near Sindhuli Gadhi. Today, other foreigners—this time the Japanese—have created a magnificent new highway that sweeps past the now crumbling fort.

With Prithvi Narayan Shah breathing down his neck in 1767,

a desperate Jayaprakash Malla, the king of Kantipur, had sent an SOS to the East India Company in Bettiah, asking to be rescued. Kinloch was despatched with 2,400 soldiers and approached through Sindhuli, heading for Panauti and the most direct route into the Kathmandu valley.

He never got there. As legend has it, his army was defeated by a simple hornets' nest, hurled from Pauwa Gadhi by a handful of

wily Gorkhali soldiers.

Were a similar invasion launched today, the soldiers would find themselves cruising up a smooth mountain highway from the plains. The road is built to Japanese specifications, with massive retaining walls, culverts and drainage channels. The only problem, say bus and truck drivers, is that the gradients are too steep in places and the road is too narrow.

Under construction for the past 12 years, the 158km highway is now nearing completion. Winding from Dhulikhel down to Bardibas, it

will reduce travel times for people journeying east for the capital by up to eight hours. At present, a bus from Kathmandu to Biratnagar first has to make a 200km detour west to Mugling and back.

The stretch of road from Sindhuli Bajar to Sindhuli Gadhi was completed a couple of years ago and, because it has not seen much traffic, it still looks pristine. The grass on the verges, free of the garbage that normally litters Nepali roads, appears almost manicured.

At Sola Bhanjyang, a path clammers up the hillside from the road to reach the old ruined





A long and winding road

Construction of the Dhulikhel-Sindhuli-Bardibas road started in November 1996, funded by a grant from the Japanese government.

When completed, the 158km road will provide the most direct route between Kathmandu and the eastern Tarai, linking Dhulikhel on the Arniko Highway with Bardibas on the East-West Highway, and reducing the distance from Bardibas to the capital by 200km.

The first section, the 37km from Bardibas to Sindhuli Bajar, was finished in March 1998 and is open to traffic, with 26km tarmacked and 11km on gravel. In January 2001 work began on the second part, the 39km from Sindhuli Bajar to Khurkot. All except 10km of this section has been finished. The 50km stretch between Dhulikhel and Nepalthok has also been finished, but work on the final section, the 32km from Khurkot to Nepalthok, has not yet begun although a rough track has been opened.

Shiva Ghimire, the senior project engineer, says the road may not be convenient for heavy trucks as it is only 5.5m wide and is intended for light vehicles. He says it had to be designed this way because of the difficult terrain and lack of funds. Work on the road was delayed two years by the conflict.



aking

fort of Sindhuli. For such a historic site, it is in a sad state of neglect. Nature is beginning to lay claim to the old walls, and the nearby palace is a derelict shell, barely a shadow of its former elegant self as immortalised by

the late Krishna Bikram Thapa in the song "Sindhuli gadhi ghumera herda, suntuaimai, katti ko ramro darbara..."

When the highway is finished, probably in the autumn, Sola Bhanjyang will be an exciting and easy 80km from Dhulikhel. Maybe then heritage conservationists, researchers and students will take an interest in restoring the fort that harks back to the glory of our past. ●

Rupa Joshi in Sindhuli



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 Leading the British Government's fight against world poverty

1. PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ADVISER
2. GOVERNANCE AND INCLUSION ADVISER

The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) is working with the Nepal Government, multilateral, bilateral agencies and civil society to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through support that is consistent with the Government of Nepal's development priorities.

DFID's work in Nepal focuses on supporting the implementation of the peace agreement, helping to build a more effective and inclusive state and the promotion of inclusive growth. DFID Nepal is a fast moving environment that prides itself on being responsive to new opportunities as they arrive. DFID Nepal is looking for highly motivated people to fill the following roles:

PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ADVISER

This is a new challenging advisory position that requires a creative and pro-active adviser. Candidates must have the enthusiasm and authority to build relationships and work with senior Government and private sector people to address fundamental issues on economic reform and improving the investment climate. S/he will need to use their leadership skills in advising DFID Nepal and working with other donors on how the private sector can best be supported through donor-supported programmes.

Qualifications/Experience

- i) A masters degree or equivalent level of academic and professional experience in business administration, accounting, finance, economics, development studies or related discipline.
- ii) At least 5 years experience in providing policy advice inputs at all levels to the public and private sectors.
- iii) Ability to design and manage programmes/projects and financial resources.

Competencies

- i) Candidates must be able to demonstrate being competent in a) Working with Others, b) Planning and Delivery of work, c) Influencing, d) Communicating with others and e) Analysis and use of information.
- ii) Fluent written/oral communications in English and Nepali.

GOVERNANCE AND INCLUSION ADVISER

This is a new and challenging advisory position that requires a creative and pro-active adviser. The successful candidate will work on developing analysis of and programmes for support to local governance and community development, and social and political inclusion. Working in close partnership with the Government and other donors, s/he will advise on how to adapt DFID funded programmes and projects to the emerging local political and government context in Nepal, and how DFID can best support achieving greater social and political inclusion.

Qualifications/Experience

- i) A Masters Degree or equivalent level of academic and professional experience in one of the following disciplines: Political Science, Public Policy, Public Administration, Sociology, Rural Development, Economics, Development Studies.
- ii) At least seven years of work experience in local governance, community development or political/social inclusion.
- iii) At least five years experience in project management.

Competencies

- i) Candidates must be able to demonstrate being competent in a) Working with Others, b) Communicating with Others, c) Analysis and use of information, d) Planning and delivery of work and e) Influencing.
- ii) Fluent written/oral communications in English and Nepali.

Located in the DFID office in Kathmandu, the successful applicants will work in a fast paced, multi-cultural environment that places a high premium on inclusive team working. The position offers significant opportunities for professional and career growth. Though based in Kathmandu, some in-country and international travel will be required.

There will be an attractive and competitive local salary and benefits package.

DFID is an Equal Opportunities employer and appoints on merit by open competition. Applicants should be Nepali residents or have a relevant work permit to work in Nepal. Applications are welcomed from all parts of the community and we actively encourage interest from women, Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis, Madhesi and those with a disability. For an application form and Terms of Reference, please e-mail recruitment-nepal@dfid.gov.uk

Please send a completed application form by e-mail to the same address. Only complete applications made on the prescribed application form will be considered. The closing date for applications is **25th July 2008**.

Cooperative federalism

The Constituent Assembly needs to begin immediately discussions on the governance structure essential for guiding the future trajectory of new Nepal.

There are two models being proposed by political parties. The Maoists have proposed dividing Nepal into 12 ethnic enclaves, whereas the Madhes-based parties have emphasised creating a single Tarai autonomous state. The NC, UML and other major parties do not have any specific proposals of their own, but have shown their reservations for both forms of federal structure. Other groups in the Tarai (Churebhabar and Tharus) are opposed to the idea of a single Tarai state.



COMMENT
Alok K Bohara

These two competing models are mostly driven by cultural sentiments. For example, by ignoring the ecological interdependence of the three geographical belts—mountains,

hills and plains—and dividing them into three long strips of separate states, there is less chance of providing a long-lasting solution.

A Tarai/Madhes state comprising a 1,000km-long strip of land bordering five Indian states is not going to be very practical for a land-locked country like Nepal with its three distinctly interdependent ecological belts. Likewise, the smaller, fragmented, ethnic enclaves proposed by the Maoists without any umbrella structure and/or central supervision could be detrimental to the unity of the country.

A much more workable model would be a cooperative federal structure with four states based on our rich river basins—Karnali, Gandaki, Kathmandu and Kosi—with a four-tiered administrative system: centre, state, region and villages (see map).



A workable political-economy approach for a New Nepal

Under this proposal, each federal state could have three to four ethnic enclaves known as regions, along the lines of the Maoists' proposed ethnic structure. These regions will send their representatives, based on their population, to form the State Legislative Assembly under a directly elected Governorship. These ethnic enclaves can enjoy some forms of carefully crafted socio-economic and cultural autonomy (schooling, language rights and cultural practices) without jeopardising the ethnic harmony and the territorial integrity of the nation.

Most Nepalis face the same problems and share the same destiny. A political solution that is also viable economically would provide a lasting solution for problems we face today. The time has come for plains people to look to the north and see the vast potential offered by the biodiversity, natural resources, water and hydropower, minerals, forest products, herbs and cash crops, which can complement the Tarai's own agricultural production, fisheries and industrial activities.

The hill people on the other hand should also look at Madhesis as their Nepali brothers and sisters and not treat them as second-class citizens. The ecological comparative advantage of the three belts, if harvested properly, can be a uniting force to solve many of the other problems in each community, including social injustices, across-the-board poverty, soil erosion, drought, immigration, food security, joblessness and flooding. Such a north-south federated system should be able to accommodate the ethnic and population balance in each regional unit to create a more representative electoral system to satisfy ethnic and cultural aspirations. Furthermore, member regions in the state assembly are compelled to set aside their ethnic differences in favour of a cooperative model to harness their relative strengths for the benefit of the entire population.

In addition, the new constitution needs to be very specific about which powers go to the federal units. If the new federal system does end up based on language and/or ethnicity, it seems reasonable to devolve school-level education to the sub-national regional entities, whereas the state-level government can focus on the autonomous university system and hydropower development. Perhaps we could also consider health care and some justice issues.

However, care needs to be taken with taxation. Though we know this to be the norm in most federal systems, the fundamental inequality in Nepali society is going to make this a very important and potentially explosive issue. While devolution sounds great, we are still going to have to have a strong central government to even things out. ●

Alok Bohara, PhD, is professor at the University of New Mexico. For a longer version of this proposal, see: [bohara\(at\)umn.edu](mailto:bohara(at)umn.edu)

Message from

LAHAN—You ignore the Madhes and you pay the price: that is the message from the eastern Tarai.

No longer can three Pahadi Bahun men sit in Baluwatar and decide for the rest of the country.

That format of decision-making had certain advantages when the peace process was at a nascent stage. But there is no alternative to more broad-based



TARAI EYE
Prashant Jha

consultation, both inside the constituent assembly and outside at the district level, if this process is to move forward.

Seen from here, Kathmandu seems to have already forgotten that elections happened in this country. The result rejected old-style Kathmandu politics, but there is just more of the same. The polls were possible because the Madhesi leadership signed the eight-point agreement and calmed the radicalisation in the Tarai.

The elections themselves revealed the intensity of identity aspirations in the Tarai. Madhesis elected their own leaders and they made it clear they would kick and scream if neglected. The daily obstruction of the assembly is an early manifestation of things to come.

However, for sections of the Madhesi leadership, hatred of the Maoists overshadows the rivalry with the NC. Girija Koirala smartly used the Madhes card to tell the Maoists they still needed him to balance things out, and that he could be dangerous in opposition.

At the same time, other



No longer can three Pahadi Bahun men sit in Baluwatar and decide for the rest of the country

Madhesi leaders saw the present round of sloganeering as preparing the ground for joining the government. Upendra Yadav is quite keen to get in but knows he could be accused of selling out, both from within the party and from other Madhesi groups.

The MJF may have ratcheted up the rhetoric to portray the supplementary amendment as a partial victory which addressed their demands for now, thus paving way to join the government.

This section does not see any advantage in cosying up to their main rival, the NC, because it is a sinking ship and is conservative on federalism. Instead, a tactical relationship with the Maoists makes more sense.

And then you have the other players who have limited stakes but are keen to make their presence felt. Mahato's Sadbhabana was furious with Koirala for unfairly giving the one seat allotted to them in the 26-seat quota to Shyam Sundar

A taste of Italy



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Bored with the same old food? Rox Restaurant at the Hyatt Regency has livened up this month's menu with new risotto and gnocchi 'specials', available until 20 July, which head sous-chef Dawa Lama says will offer a "unique pasta flavour to the Nepali people".

These additions to the usual

menu, it must be said, are simply delicious, offering customers a whole new taste of Italian food beyond run-of-the-mill pasta dishes and plain old pizza.

The risotto, cooked with the delectably soft, plump and sticky japonica rice sautéed in olive oil or butter is definitely worth trying. One option, the

'risotto de mari', is a magnificent combination of shrimp, squid and prawn covered with a luxurious bisque sauce. Or there's a green asparagus risotto, which uses asparagus and seasonal vegetables organically grown in the hotel's own garden. Perhaps best of all is the wild mushroom and Fontina cheese risotto, which draws out the exquisite flavour of the porcini mushrooms.

With the gnocchi, Rox offers an adventurous beetroot, saffron and spinach gnocchi as well as the plain variety. Accompanying this simple yet delicious dumpling dish are a selection of rich, aromatic sauces ranging from basil pesto to sage butter, mushroom and blue cheese, and bolognese.

Washed down with a glass of crisp Australian Pinot grigio, these new dishes will give your taste buds a thorough, and doubtless pleasing, workout! ●
Shradha Basnyat

the Madhes



BHASWOR OJHA

Gupta, a discredited politician without a party or any following.

Junior leaders of the TMLP like Jitendra Sonal and Ram Kumar Sharma were with Upendra Yadav last year, then allied with the more radical faction of Kishore Biswas and were active during the street protests. Agitation politics has got them this far and they feel it

is the way to climb higher in Kathmandu.

The assembly is meant to write a new constitution, not only to amend the interim constitution. In that sense, the demand for incorporating Madhes-related clauses means little in specific terms. But for many Madhesi leaders, this was a test case to see if their demands would be

addressed within the CA framework.

Once they felt the need for such a constitutional guarantee, there was no need for the other parties to make such a big deal and drag their feet. They should have been more willing, and prompt, to give a firmer commitment to a previously signed agreement.

The Madhesi parties were not demanding a united Madhes in this amendment. But there was an orchestrated attempt by the UML, its loyalist civil society and sections of the media, to portray it that way to show Madhesi groups as unreasonable.

Samagra Madhes is a future battle, not the issue right now. The UML's move exposed it for what it is: an insular Pahadi party and true disciple of Mahendra's nationalism. Balkhu may seem important in the numbers game right now, but their expected marginalisation from Nepali politics is good news for the Madhes.

In Nepal's polarised politics, the Madhes card will tilt the game and decide the winner. It can be used in different ways. It may spring up when you least expect it. Whether it goes along with the other actors is impossible to predict. What is certain is that it cannot be discarded. ●

Monsoon sky

July is when the monsoon peaks in Nepal and the night sky is generally obscured by cloud. But remember—when the sky becomes clear after rain, you will be rewarded with very sharp images of the stars and planets because of the increased moisture in the atmosphere.

This month we have a meteor shower, the Earth reaches its most distant position from the Sun, and we have some great views of the planets. But first, let's make sure you know your way around the sky.

In the north-western skies the Big Dipper (Saptarshi) is still visible, and you should be able by now to use two of its stars, Merak and Dubhe, as pointers to help you find Polaris, almost at the north celestial pole.

Do you notice three bright stars—Vega, Deneb and Altair—forming a triangle on the eastern horizon? This is the great Summer Triangle that signals the arrival of summer and will dominate the night sky for several months, so take some time to become familiar with it. Just below the Summer Triangle you will notice the zodiacal constellation of Sagittarius (the Archer), where you will find Jupiter, the king of the planets.

West of Sagittarius, you should easily be able to identify other zodiacal constellations, namely Scorpius (the Scorpion), Libra (the Scales), Virgo (the Virgin) and Leo (the Lion).



STARGAZING
Kedar S Badu



On 6 July, watch Mars, Saturn and the Moon get together

On 4 July the Earth reaches the aphelion—the position in its orbit where it is farthest from the Sun. We are then about three per cent further from the Sun than we are at the closest point, the perihelion, reached in early January. Most people are surprised to learn that our planet is farthest from the Sun in midsummer! Note that the seasons are caused by the tilt of the Earth, not by the distance between the Sun and Earth.

Of the other planets, **Mercury** is at its greatest elongation west of the Sun on 1 July, when it will rise in the north-east about an hour before the Sun. It won't be easy to see this planet in the dawn sky, and by the end of the month it will be hidden behind the Sun. **Venus** is now starting to emerge from behind the Sun, but it is still a very shy "evening star", setting in the west only half an hour after the Sun.

Mars, in Leo, is still visible this month, low in the west immediately after sunset. **Saturn** will be very close to **Mars** and significantly brighter. On the evening of 6 July, don't miss the chance to see the meeting of **Mars**, **Saturn** and the crescent **Moon** just below the "sickle" of Leo (see star chart). The giant planet **Jupiter** is at opposition to the Sun on 9 July, when it will be appearing in the south-east at dusk and setting in the south-west at dawn.

Meteor watchers should prepare for the Southern Delta Aquarids, a meteor shower which peaks on 29 July. If you happen to be outside after midnight on or around that date, you might see some meteors in the southern sky. If you miss them, don't worry, because in mid-August we will have the Perseids, the best meteor shower display of the year. ●

kedarbadu(at)gmail.com



WWF for a living planet

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

WWF, the global conservation organization leading international efforts for a living planet, seeks applications from qualified candidates for the following position.

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This Initiative will focus on transformational strategies that transcend political boundaries by bringing governments, NGOs, donor agencies and local communities together to ensure large-scale protection and connectivity of habitats, tackle the principal threats to the region's rich biodiversity including human-wildlife conflict and illegal wildlife trade, challenge key industries to minimise their negative environmental impacts and respond to the potentially devastating impacts of climate change in the Eastern Himalayas.

The Leader will provide dynamic leadership to ensure a high profile for the work and to support delivery on the challenging outputs. Specific responsibilities will include leading the development of the Strategic Plan; leading coordination of the Initiative, focusing on the delivery of the regional strategies; managing a small Core Team; and working in tandem with the small WWF Shareholders Group to establish the operational framework of the Initiative; formulate budgets and secure funds and build strategic partnerships.

Applicants must have a successful track record in developing strategic programs and implementing complex large-scale programs; excellent cross-cultural and people skills; and successful relationship management experience. The applicant must possess an advanced degree or equivalent work experience in environmental, and/or natural-resource management or international development with at least 10 years professional experience, as well as, fluency in English. S/he must be willing and able to undertake regular travel in difficult conditions.

A pleasant personality with an ability to constructively motivate, coordinate and lead a team, an ability to think laterally and analytically, extensive field experience in the Eastern Himalayas and a sound understanding of the socio-cultural milieu would be a distinct advantage.

The position will be based in Nepal.

Interested candidates should mail a cover letter and CV to the following address or email to recruitments@wwfint.org

Application deadline: Friday 25 July 2008

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Football is war

But Euro 2008 saw more harm only between rival fans than ever before

AMSTERDAM— The late Arthur Koestler, born in Budapest, resident of many countries, and writer in several languages, once said that there is nationalism, and there is football nationalism. The feelings inspired by the latter are by far the stronger.



CROSSING CULTURES
Ian Buruma

Koestler himself, a proud and loyal British citizen, remained a lifelong Hungarian soccer nationalist.

For several weeks this summer, the stadiums in Austria and Switzerland, not to mention the streets of European capitals, from Madrid to Moscow, were given to an orgy of flag-waving, anthem-singing, drum-beating patriotism. Spain's victory was one of the rare occasions that Catalans, Castilians, Basques and Andalusians erupted together in an explosion of patriotic delight.

Football, more than most sports, lends itself to tribal feelings: the collective effort, the team colours, the speed, the physical aggression. As a famous Dutch football coach once said, not in jest: "Soccer is war."

It was not supposed to be like this. After two world wars, displays of national fervor became more or less taboo in Europe. Nationalism was blamed for almost destroying the old continent twice in the 20th century. The kind of exalted patriotism, especially when combined with warrior pride, was for a long time associated with mass slaughter. The English, who escaped occupation by a hostile power and believe they won World War II alone (well, with a little help from the Yanks), still have a militaristic streak. They are exceptional. Hence, perhaps, the notorious belligerence of English soccer fans.

And yet, even as nationalistic

emotions were suppressed in polite society all over Europe, the soccer stadiums remained stubbornly in the pre-WWII world. Just as killing continues to be celebrated in ritualised form in Spanish bull rings, illicit tribal feelings are given full vent in the soccer arenas.

These feelings can be festive, even carnival-like, as they were in Euro 2008. But they can contain something darker, more aggressive too, especially when sporting combat is loaded with historical memory. Games between Holland and Germany, for example, or Germany and Poland, tended, until very recently, to be reenactments of the war.

When Holland beat Germany in the semi-finals of the 1988 European Championship, it was as though justice finally had been done. More Dutch people turned out in the streets of Amsterdam for a night and day of celebration than when the

country was actually liberated in May 1945. The tribal feelings of Germans were considered, for obvious reasons, to be particularly toxic after Hitler's Reich, which is why German flag-waving, until recently, was exercised with a slight air of shame-faced restraint that was entirely absent in surrounding countries.

When France won the World Cup in 1998, the French liked to point out the ethnic diversity of their team. Their main star, Zinedine Zidane, was of Algerian stock. Others had ancestral roots in various parts of Africa. Something profound is changing in Europe, slowly, painfully but surely. If ethnic diversity is more and more common in national sides, it is even more marked in clubs.

Who would have predicted 30 years ago that British soccer fans would have cheered for a London team full of Africans, Latin Americans, and Spaniards, coached by a Frenchman? Or that

the national England team would be managed by an Italian?

But ethnic and cultural diversity is not all that has changed the face of European football. I have never seen such harmony between the supporters of different nations as in this year's championship. Perhaps it was due to the absence of England, whose fans include the last bands of amateur warriors. But the peaceful, carnival spirit that prevailed, the flying of Turkish and German flags side by side in German streets, when the two nations met in the semi-finals, the joint Spanish-German celebrations after the final, all this suggests something fresh.

Not that national feeling is dying, but national identities in Europe are no longer quite so colored by memories of war. No one much minds any more when Germany wins, as it so often does. The Germans are now much too nice for that. Yet I have to admit that I still could not suppress a tiny, keenly felt pleasure when Germany lost to Spain.

Perhaps because Spain played more beautiful football. Or perhaps it just shows my age. ● Project Syndicate

Ian Buruma is Professor of human rights at Bard College. His most recent book is Murder in Amsterdam: The Killing of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance.

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First date of publication: 3 July 2008

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal – UNDP

The Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal/UNDP is looking for experienced and qualified Nepalese citizens for the following positions with substantive experience.

Post Title : **Sr. Translator/Interpreter (2) - SB 4**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the direct supervision of the International Project Manager, the incumbent is responsible for:

- Coordinating the overall translation work for the project among all the full-time and part-time translators/interpreters so that each person's workload is manageable.
- Providing advice and guidance for the Translators/Interpreters in the project team, and ensuring the consistent and timely production of high quality translation.
- Providing written translation of conference reports, research papers, articles, features, news reports, draft legislation and other relevant documents which are essential for the project work between English and Nepali, possibly other major languages in Nepal such as Bhojपुरी, Maithali and Tharu.
- Ensuring the quality of translation work and language in terms of simplicity and accuracy of meaning and timely completion of the translation.
- Transcribing recorded proceedings of conferences, if required, translating and editing the recorded and transcribed proceedings of major conferences and workshops.
- Assisting in editing and proof-reading draft texts of publications throughout the production process, preparing briefing notes of meetings, seminars and workshops, and documenting them, as and when required.
- Conducting simultaneous interpretation of presentations and discussions between English and Nepali. Undertaking other related tasks as instructed by the supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

- An advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in linguistics, English, Nepali, journalism, or related field. A first level university degree with a relevant combination of academic qualifications and extensive relevant experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.
- A minimum of 5 to 7 years of experience of working in translation, interpretation, linguistics, journalism, preparing reports in English or Nepali language, or other relevant area.
- Excellent command in written English and Nepali, with full accuracy of translation from English to Nepali. Knowledge of other major languages in Nepal such as Bhojपुरी, Maithali and Tharu will be a great advantage.
- Good communication skills in both English and Nepali, experiences of translating resource materials of UN agencies, especially legal and constitutional documents, will be a great advantage, basic computer skills, particularly word-processing in English and Nepali, are required, ability to deliver under pressure.

Post Title : **Translator/Interpreter (4) - SB 3**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One -year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the direct supervision of the International Project Manager, the incumbent is responsible for:

- Providing written translation of conference reports, research papers, articles, features, news reports, draft legislation and other relevant documents which are essential for the project work between English and Nepali, possibly other major languages in Nepal such as Bhojपुरी, Maithali and Tharu.
- Ensuring the quality of translation work and language in terms of simplicity and accuracy of meaning and timely completion of the translation, transcribing recorded proceedings of conferences, if required.
- Translating and editing the recorded and transcribed proceedings of major conferences and workshops, assisting in editing and proof-reading draft texts of publications throughout the production process, preparing briefing notes of meetings, seminars and workshops, and documenting them, as and when required.
- Conducting simultaneous interpretation of presentations and discussions between English and Nepali, undertaking other related tasks as instructed by the supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

- At least a Bachelor's degree in either English or Nepali language with a minimum of five years experiences of working in translation, interpretation, linguistics, journalism, preparing reports in English or Nepali language, or other relevant area.
- Excellent command in written English and Nepali, with full accuracy of translation from English to Nepali, knowledge of other major languages in Nepal such as Bhojपुरी, Maithali and Tharu will be a great advantage.
- Good communication skills in both English and Nepali, experiences of translating resource materials of UN agencies, especially legal and constitutional documents, will be a great advantage, basic computer skills, particularly word-processing in English and Nepali, are required, ability to deliver under pressure, ability to work independently as well as in a team in a multi-cultural environment.

Post Title : **Sr. Legal Officer (2) - SB 5**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the overall guidance of the Constitution Building Advisor and the direct supervision of the International Project Manager, the incumbent is responsible for:

- Playing a leading role in gathering information about the recent developments in the CA through liaising with the CA Secretariat, relevant committees and government institutions, donors and other key actors in constitution building.
- Providing strategic inputs for planning and implementing CA support activities, and for developing or modifying the project approach.
- Providing advice and guidance for the Legal Officers in conducting their research and other duties, conducting research on various topics relevant to the project activities, responding to the requests for information and advice from CA delegates, CSOs, and other clients of the Resource Centre.
- Preparing background papers for conferences, workshops, and seminars, preparing option papers for members of the Constituent Assembly, political parties and others on the instructions of supervisors
- Contributing to compiling resource materials relevant for conferences, workshops, and seminars, participating regularly in coordination meetings among the donors and other relevant actors to ensure that CA support activities are carried out in a holistic manner, maintaining a close liaison with CA delegates and CSO members representing marginalized communities and supporting their capacity development initiatives.
- Contributing to identifying and compiling materials to be uploaded on the Support to Constitution Building website on the UNDP Nepal web, and if necessary writing website content. Undertaking other related tasks as instructed by the supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

- A Master's degree or preferably Phd. equivalent in law or any other related social science
- 7 - 10 years of working experience in areas related to legal advice, legal research, report writing, or other relevant areas of work.
- Proven expertise particularly in such key topics as constitutional law, human rights, gender and social inclusion, and federalism would be strongly preferred, past working experience at UN agencies and/or donor agencies would be an advantage, excellent writing skills in both English and Nepali.
- Good understanding of and familiarity with issues related to peace process and constitution making in Nepal, basic computer skills, particularly word-processing in English and Nepali, are required, ability to work and deliver outputs under pressure, good communication skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural team environment.

Post Title : **Legal Officer (2) - SB 4**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One -year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the overall guidance of the Constitution Building Advisor and the direct supervision of the International Project Manager, the incumbent is responsible for:

- Conducting research on various topics relevant to the project activities.
- Responding to the requests for information and advice from CA delegates, CSOs, and other clients of the Resource Centre, preparing background papers for conferences, workshops, and seminars, Preparing option papers for members of the Constituent Assembly, political parties and others on the instructions of supervisors, contributing to compiling resource materials relevant for conferences, workshops, and seminars.
- Participating regularly in coordination meetings among the donors and other relevant actors to ensure that CA support activities are carried out in a holistic manner.
- Maintaining a close liaison with CA delegates and CSO members representing marginalized communities and supporting their capacity development initiatives.
- Contributing to identifying and compiling materials to be uploaded on the Support to Constitution Building website on the UNDP Nepal web, and if necessary writing website content, Undertaking other related tasks as instructed by the supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

- A Master's degree or equivalent in law or any other related social science
- At least 5 - 7 years of working experience in areas related to legal advice, legal research, report writing, or other relevant areas of work.
- Proven expertise particularly in such key topics as constitutional law, human rights, gender and social inclusion, and federalism would be strongly preferred.
- Past working experience at UN agencies and/or donor agencies would be an advantage, excellent writing skills in both English and Nepali.
- Good understanding of and familiarity with issues related to peace process and constitution making in Nepal. Basic computer skills, particularly word-processing in English and Nepali, are required, ability to work and deliver outputs under pressure, good communication skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural team environment.

Post Title : **Publications Officer - SB 4**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One -year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the overall guidance of the Constitution Building Advisor and the direct supervision of the International Communications and Outreach Advisor, the incumbent is responsible for:

- Oversee and provide inputs from the communications perspective for preparation of reports and other publications, so that the product is tailored to the needs of the different audience groups and at the same time meets the editorial standard and quality of UNDP.
- Ensure timely translation of various publications and other products in appropriate languages, facilitate the entire production process of a wide range of publications, including editing, design and layout, and printing, design and implement the dissemination strategy for the project's publications and other communications products, to ensure maximum impact and outreach, upgrade, maintain and publicize the website on UNDP Support to Constitution Building.
- Ensure proper documentation of project activities with a range of stakeholders, including civil society and social mobilizers, through video and photographs to be used in the project's communication and outreach products, undertaking other related tasks as instructed by the supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

- A Master's degree in communications, journalism, public relations or other related field, or equivalent. A first level university degree with a relevant combination of academic qualifications and extensive relevant experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.
- At least 5 - 7 years of working experience at the national or international level in journalism, communications, public relations, or related fields.
- Past experience in doing similar work in UNDP or any international agency would be a great advantage, excellent writing skills in both English and Nepali, good understanding of and familiarity with issues related to constitution making in Nepal.
- Basic computer skills, particularly word-processing in English and Nepali, are required. Ability to work and deliver outputs under pressure, good communication skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural team environment.

Post Title : **Driver (1) - SB 1**
Contract Type : Service Contract
Duration : One -year, initially (renewable)

Responsibilities

Under the direct supervision of the UNDP International Advisor, the incumbent will be responsible for, inter alia:

- Drives Office vehicles for the transport of authorized personnel and delivery and collection of mail, documents and other items. Meets official personnel at the airport and facilitates immigration and customs formalities as required.
- Responsible for the day to day maintenance of the assigned vehicle, check oil, water, battery, brakes, tires etc; Perform minor repairs and arranges for other repair's and ensures that the vehicle is kept clean, Logs Official trips, daily mileage, gas consumption, oil changes, greasing, etc.
- Ensure that the steps required by rules and regulations are taken in case of involvement in accident. Perform other duties as required.

Qualifications and Experience

- Primary Education, driver's license, knowledge of driving rules and regulations and skills in minor vehicle repair.

Applications should be submitted no later than **20 July 2008**
by email, to: hrmu2_np@undp.org or in a sealed envelope to
UNDP Operations Department (Ref: SPCB/UNDP), UN House, Pulchowk, P.O. Box 107,
Kathmandu, Nepal
(Only Applicants who are short-listed will be contacted)

Applicants must submit the updated standard UN Personal History Form available from the UN House Reception or the UNDP webpage <http://www.undp.org.np/vacancy.htm>

Work experience and/or academic knowledge in relation to gender and social exclusion will be an added advantage. Women, Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis, people with disabilities, and other minorities are especially encouraged to apply. UNDP has a policy to have a gender balance in its staff at all levels by 2010.

ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **Nepalscapes** exhibition of paintings by Jolanda Aucott and Gyanmani Ray, until 9 July at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited, Kathmandu 11AM-6PM. 4218048
- ❖ **Absence of Objects** exhibition of paintings by Saroj Kushwaha, until 15 July at 5.30 PM, Park Gallery, Pulchok. 5522307
- ❖ **Tattva** multimedia and collage exhibition by Chirag Bangdel until 18 July, 5.30 PM at Bakery Café, Pulchok.
- ❖ **Connection** solo charity art exhibition by Juju Kaji Maharjan, 6 July-6 August, 2PM at 1905 Restaurant, Kantipath, 9851050299

EVENTS

- ❖ **Charlie Wilson's War** a film starring Tom Hanks, at Lazimpat Gallery Café, 8 July, 6.30 pm, 4428549
- ❖ **Silence of Bardiya**, wildlife conservation play by Aarohan-Gurukul, till 11 July (except Mondays), 5.30 PM at Rimal Theatre, Gurkhul. 4466956.
- ❖ **Change** fundraiser concert with performances by Kutumba and others at Rimal Hall, Gurkhul, 12 July, Rs350. 985103477
- ❖ **Summer Cult Film Festival** at the Lazimpat Gallery Café, throughout July and August.



MUSIC

- ❖ **Live jazz** at HyJazz club, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu, 8.30 PM onwards. 489800
- ❖ **Make Monsoon Music** Jazzabell Cafe every Wednesday and Friday 6.30 PM. 20 per cent discount on all drinks between 6-7PM. Live Music Jam session every Wednesday and Friday
- ❖ **Live karaoke** with special Thai cuisine, every Wednesday at Holiday Karaoke Restaurant and Bar, Lazimpat. 4445731
- ❖ **Rudra night** fusion and classical Nepali music by Shyam Nepali and friends, every Friday, 7PM at Le Meridien, Gokarna. 4451212
- ❖ **Sufi music** by Hemanta Rana, every Friday at 7.30 PM at Dhaba Restaurant and Bar, Thapathali.

DINING

- ❖ **Risotto and gnocchi** at the Rox Restaurant, Hyatt regency, Kathmandu, till 20th July from 7-10.30PM
- ❖ **Continental and Cafe** item with a live band every Friday at Vintage Cafe and Pub, Woodland complex, Durbar Marg
- ❖ **The Fun Cafe**, discounts available 12.30-2.30PM and 6:30-10:30 PM at Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu, Rs. 800 till 31 July, 4411818
- ❖ **Sixth Annual Wine Festival** until September at Kilroy's, Jyatha. 4250440
- ❖ **Thakali and local cuisine** at Marpha Thakali Restaurant and Bar, Teku. 4104504
- ❖ **Lajawab** tandoori and kabab festival, 7-10 PM every Friday at the Hotel Himalaya, Rs 550.
- ❖ **Japanese lunch set**, Rs 445 at Shogun, Japanese restaurant, Babar Mahal Revisited. 4263720
- ❖ **Home made pasta** at Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **The Kaiser Café open now** at the Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, open from 9AM-10PM. 4425341
- ❖ **Mango étagère** mango delicacies 4.30-6.30 PM at the Lounge, Hyatt Regency. 4491234
- ❖ **Steak escape** with Kathmandu's premier steaks at the Olive Bar and Bistro, Hotel Radisson. 4411818
- ❖ **Bourbon Room Restro-bar** now open for lunch and dinner with over a 100 cocktails, Lal Darbar.
- ❖ **Cocktails and grooves** with jazz by Inner Groove at Fusion-the bar at Dwarika's, every Wednesday, at Dwarika's Hotel.
- ❖ **Cocktails, mocktails and liqueurs** at the Asahi Lounge, opening hours 1-10PM, above Himalayan Java, Thamel.
- ❖ **Illy espresso coffee** at the Galleria cafe, every Friday espresso cocktails.
- ❖ **International buffet** at the Sunrise Café, and Russian specialties at Chimney, Hotel Yak and Yeti. 4248999
- ❖ **Jazz in Patan** with coffee, food, drinks and dessert at the New Orleans Cafe, Jawalakhel. 8.30 AM-10PM. 5522708
- ❖ **Scrumptious wood fired pizzas**, cocktails and more at Roadhouse, Bhatbateni 4426587, Pulchok 5521755 and Thamel 4260187.
- ❖ **Retro Brunch Barbeque** with live acoustic music by Sound Chemistry, every Saturday, 12-3PM at LeMeridien-Kathmandu, Gokarna. 4451212
- ❖ **Dhamaka** a Nepali style barbeque with a pan-Indian fusion at the Splash Bar and Grill, Hotel Radisson, 7PM, every Friday. 4411818
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with Live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs. 666.00 at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999
- ❖ **Kebabs and curries** at the Dhaba, Thapathali. 9841290619
- ❖ **Lavazza coffee** Italy's favourite coffee at La Dolce Vita, Thamel, Roadhouse Café Pulchok and Thamel. 4700612
- ❖ **Pizza** from the woodfired oven at Java, Thamel. 4422519

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors(at)nepalitimes.com



Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na is the story of Jai and Aditi, two people who couldn't be more different. Aditi thinks Jai is the biggest coward she has ever met, while Jai is least impressed by Aditi's feisty character. However, whenever Aditi becomes a 'wildcat' in a fight, it is only Jai who can calm her. The story revolves around how Jai and Aditi realise that their differences might just merge into love. Add to this plot, a series of funny, fortunate and unfortunate events and you have a movie, which is cool, warm, hip and funny.

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WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

June was the fourth consecutive month with below-average rainfall recorded at many weather stations, including those within the Kathmandu valley. July is statistically the wettest month of Nepal, and satellite photos clearly show a monsoon trough moving from the Bay of Bengal towards the hills. The pressure charts indicate that conditions are favorable for these to reach the foothills, so we can expect heavy rain in central and eastern Nepal at the weekend as the front edge of this system reaches us. Later storms are likely to follow a more westerly track from the Arabian Sea arm of the monsoon. As a result, daytime temperatures will fluctuate by two degrees. Advice: prepare for a wet weekend.



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हरेक आइतबार विडियो (१:४०-२:००)
"रेडियो सगरमाथा विपणित सुनी, अंग्रेजी सुधारी"
(रेडियो सगरमाथा र अमेरिकी राजदूतावास, अमेरिकी केन्द्रको सहकार्य)

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हरेक विहान ८:०० देखि राती ११:०० बजे सम्म सुचना शिक्षा र स्वास्थ्य सम्बन्धितका लागि सरकारी सानो रेडियो सगरमाथा १०२ थोप्लो ४ मेगाहर्ट्ज



KIRAN PANDAY

FINGER OF FUDGE: Prime Minister Koirala speaks at the inauguration of the new Rotary International District for Nepal on Tuesday.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

HEAVY METAL: The gold plating of Swoyambu Stupa, expected to be finished in two years, started on Tuesday with donations worth Rs 41 million from the Californian-based Ningma Meditation Centre.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM: Activists of the human rights group Insec organise a signature campaign to pressure the government to accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, at Maitighar Mandala on Tuesday.



KIRAN PANDAY

UMBRELLA ORGANISATION: Landless people, living on the banks of Kathmandu's Bagmati and Bishnumati rivers, stage a protest at the Maitighar Mandala on Wednesday, demanding settlement and sanitation in slum areas.

CONFUSED??#!

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WHEREVER WE GO I NEED WI-FI HA!
NAH LET'S HAVE SOMETHING LIGHT SANDWICHES OR ROLLS.
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JULY ISSUE

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Federal Democratic Republic of Rubbish

The thing to do with the current garbage crisis is to keep a positive mental attitude as you are knocked unconscious by the stench of rubbish in the capital of our glorious new republic.

For example, it is now much easier to give directions to people to my house. ("Get off the micro at Pulchok, turn left at the big black bull sitting in the middle of the road, walk uphill, let your

nose guide you to the neighbourhood dump, and the Ass's abode is the third gate on the right. If you see another garbage pile that is causing a monstrous traffic jam because it is completely blocking the road, then you have gone too far.") This is probably the only city in the world where garbage causes traffic jams.

Nepal Tourism Board, always on the lookout for new ways to boost visitor arrivals now that

Tibet is closed, should make the best of the situation and come up with trashy slogans like: 'Why Go To Naples When You Can Go To Nepal?', 'Federal Democratic Republic of Rubbish', 'Watch Us Consigning Ourselves To the Garbage Heap of History', 'Come Rot With Us'.



While the YCL is now starting to translocate garbage from one neighbourhood of the city to other neighbourhoods as part of its transformation from the Red Guards into a Gandhian NGO, guess who is taking over from the YCL? The UML's own Youth Force (Motto: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em) is using the YCL modus operandi of vigilante justice and deploying goons to make showcase sting operations in front of tv cameras. The media is lapping up this ready-made drama because producers have realised it is the cheapest way to fill the airtime.

However, Comrade JN is reportedly coming under a lot of flak from within his party and donors about his new street gang. In one meeting on Wednesday, he tried to completely disown the Youth Force but it wasn't very convincing because Jhallubabu himself publicly tied red

bandanas on the Hormone Hoodlums at a ceremony in Koteswor two weeks ago. Not to be outdone, the kangresi Tarun Dal is thinking of forming its own Pimple Platoon called Adolescent Army.



It now transpires that JN was too much of an eager beaver in prematurely endorsing Kamred Makunay for president. He had thought this would neatly sideline his rival for party leader, but it now looks like Prachanda took Jhallu for a ride, like he did the Madhesis and the kangresis with his carrot and stick approach.

With a new candidate emerging every hour, tables are turning again in the presidential race. GPK is reportedly back in the ring after an earlier KO—not because Girjau wants it but because His Fierceness wants it. Yes, the choice of prez is stuck not because of competing claims by the Big Four but because of internal divisions within the Maoists.

Here is the state of play in a nutshell: Mohan Baidya wants Sahana, Fearsome wanted Makunay but wouldn't mind Ram Raja or Giri-rajia but is hesitating because he doesn't want to be

sworn in by GPK, Baburam wants PKD as prez so he can be executive prime minister, the army wants neither PKD nor GPK, JN wants MKN but only to prevent Sahana while some sections of the UML want Nembang, Pokharelis want Kamal Nepali for president. And GPK wants GPK. All clear?



How come the Brits are so keen on PLA integration? A junket they'd organised in Pat Pong for this week has been postponed because only retired jarsaps, govt guys and ex-guerrillas agreed to go. Field Marshal Girija also put his foot down and reportedly asked the Brits if they had inducted the IRA into their own army. If they were so keen, the British Army could integrate the Maoists into the Gurkha Rifles and deploy them in Helmand Province.



The winning contender for this week's New Name Contest is Shekhar from Handigau for renaming 'Ram Shah Path' to 'Prachanda Path'.

Entries to the New Name contest to: [ass\(at\)nepalitimes.com](mailto:ass(at)nepalitimes.com)



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